

The Incline Project

Critical Issues to Date

The following issues and proposed solutions were gathered through Incline Task Force meetings, an Incline site visit, and key stakeholder interviews

Issue Category	Issues and Proposed Solutions
Parking and Traffic	<p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce congestion - Parking and traffic are the biggest and hardest issues to solve ✓ - Make the parking solution comprehensive by considering measures that impact both hikers and people who use the Cog - Conditions of Ruxton and Hydro make them inadequate for traffic ✓ - Enforcement ✓ - Should multi-user shuttle solutions be considered? ✓ - Overlapping parking needs: Church (Street) vs. trail - Access: one, multiple, location? ✓ - Destroying the town's historic fabric just to provide more parking <p><u>Proposed solutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider all the "social" parking lots, e.g. by the radio tower, Hogginbotham Flats, and Quarry Falls - We need to think of smaller, pocket parking to help solve the problem - Maximize use of the Iron Springs parking lot through better management and make it part of the solution - Meter the Barr Tail parking lot with a sign below that says "Lot Full" and provides information on parking alternatives ✓ - Make Ruxton Avenue parking by residential permit only - Make parking, restrooms, and access in one area - Step up enforcement of current laws - Try enforcement first to see if that fixes the problem before you take more drastic measures ✓ - Shuttles should go up and down Ruxton Avenue ✓ - In the 1920s or 30s there was a trolley from the Loop building to the Cog Railroad so there is historic precedence for this type of transportation - Build a parking garage downtown with shuttles to serve all of Ruxton Avenue ✓ - A shuttle is preferable to a parking garage - There's discussion of a parking garage with fees - Make the Barr Trail parking lot for Barr Trail use only ✓ - Institute paid parking - Install signage to direct Incline parking away from Cog or Barr parking - When trails are connected people will start parking at other places, will make trail loops, and will help solve some of the parking and traffic problems

✓ indicates the item was mentioned multiple times

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Trails & Trailheads	<p data-bbox="459 212 537 240"><u>Issues</u></p> <ul data-bbox="459 245 1908 638" style="list-style-type: none">- Erosion, drainage and sediment control ✓- Include Barr Trail in planning- Barr Trail’s capacity and the wear and tear on it- Social trail at the top of the Incline should be sustainable and safe ✓- Integration, coordination, and connectivity of trails and trailheads in the area ✓<ul data-bbox="604 430 1908 638" style="list-style-type: none">o Congestion on the trail systems and the Barr Trail area and Ruxton Avenueo The capacity on all trails in the area and on Ruxton Avenue ✓o Utilities has proposed to relocated the Ute Indian Trail trailhead to the Barr Trail parking loto There’s an opportunity to diversify use patterns of trails in the vicinity and disperse use in the whole areao A trail network is needed to disperse the use and parkingo Loss of trail connections <p data-bbox="459 678 698 706"><u>Proposed Solutions</u></p> <ul data-bbox="459 711 2529 1243" style="list-style-type: none">- Stop foot traffic up Incline from Barr Trail- Make a new Incline trailhead at the very bottom- Reroute the social trail off the top of the Incline- Make the parking lot for Barr Trail only- Relocate the Barr Trailhead to get all the traffic off Ruxton. Put it by Indian Spring at the west end of Manitou Avenue and close the existing Barr Trail lot- Preserve the Incline route up to Barr Trail- Map the larger trail network and provide other access points for the Incline- Look at things like parking in Higginbotham Flats and along Manitou Avenue- The existing Utilities pipeline single track trail above Rattlesnake Gulch could be connected through the Cog easement and a trail run from the Incline switchback over to Ute Indian Trail- Ute Indian Trail, the Intemann Trail, Ring the Peak, the American Discovery Trail, the Williams Canyon Trail, and the Waldo Canyon Trail are all in the area. There needs to be an integrated approach- Connect Ute Indian Trail and the Intemann Trail to the Incline- Integrate the trailhead for Ute Indian Trail- The County sees Ute Indian Trail as the spine trail that they would like to connect to Rainbow Falls

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Incline Site	<p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Circulation control ✓- “Passive” areas for picnics, reflection, relaxation ✓- Concentration of surface water and dumping into the drainage to the north; understand impacts to adjacent drainage; possibly sheet flow- Make the Incline legal ✓- It’s a special thing ✓<ul style="list-style-type: none">o It’s a training site for climbs in the Himalayas and for the Fourteeners and there are local group traditions connected to ito Open it and have it become another tourist attraction that could benefit the town and keep more people downtowno The Incline is part of Manitou’s identity and has the potential to bring more people into the business district and even the Heritage Museumo It’s a really unique feature of Manitou Springs as the highest and steepest incline in Americano It’s a key community asset. If it were closed it would be a huge failure for the community <p><u>Proposed Solutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make Incline traffic one-way going up ✓- Replace metal drums and culverts with new- Stabilize / secure railroad ties- Rest spots integrated with stabilization; need to block / discourage social trails from stops- Don’t want it “Disney-ized”: smooth staircase and uniform steps ✓- Keep the historic, rustic nature, with the railroad ties and the drainage pipes- <u>Not</u> a “Stairway to heaven”; not easier, just safer ✓- Don’t sanitize it and clean it up too much—it’s an adventure

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Operations, Management, Marketing	<p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Operation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Solutions should be comprehensive and include alternatives○ How to let people use the Incline for hiking and recreation purposes without driving the neighbors crazy○ Ongoing maintenance needs○ The plan needs to account for trail maintenance and who's going to do it○ A sustainable trail○ Security and maintenance of the Colorado Springs Utilities' (CSU) infrastructure in the area<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A plan to upgrade the Incline could help improve erosion on the water line adjacent to it▪ CSU may need to temporarily restrict use because of maintenance activities○ Coordinating the use of public facilities and producing revenue from that use will protect the trail and the CSU watershed○ Hours of operation: effect on residents' quality of life○ Liability: who is responsible?○ Can access to the Incline be controlled?○ Who will operate it?- Safety<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Emergency access routes and staging, top and bottom○ Not a danger to users○ Too many liabilities could cause the closure of the Incline○ Having people on it who shouldn't be there because of their physical capacity○ Safety of users and residents- Education and Regulation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Post trail etiquette signs○ Dogs, dog waste, dogs off-leash○ Human waste and toilet paper in surrounding area○ Volunteer stewardship; dedicated group for Incline○ Coordinate volunteer activities for mx (?)○ Historic and interpretive programs○ Trail locational markers for emergency services○ Rules and regulations○ Education is key○ Enforcement○ How many people should be on it at one time in order to be able to have a meaningful experience?

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Operations, Management, Marketing	<p><u>Issues</u> <i>(continued)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Funding<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Congestion solutions: paid for by user fees and partner entitieso Fee-based? ✓o How to fund? Not an asset unless it pays for itselfo Revenue stream to maintain trail and parkingo Viable funding options to solve the whole problem <p><u>Proposed Solutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Trash cans at key locations- The City of Colorado Springs should not operate it because they would be managing the whole Ruxton canyon- Form an Upper Ruxton Management Association made up of various representatives from the area to operate the Incline- Liability is not an issue if the property owners sign it over to an operating agency; if it's a governmental agency it will have immunity- May need to fly in pipes for Utilities' electrical and water system repairs- Parking revenues must go for maintenance- Make the Incline self-sustaining through sponsorships or utility-related grants- Trail location markers for emergency services- Health and safety warnings: black diamond ranking- Establish and communicate rules of use- Communicate intensity of experience: black diamond ranking- Set guidelines for hikers, including a timeframe- Educate Incline users about having respect for a residential area

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Planning Process	<p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It's not going to be possible to make everybody happy- Manitou Springs residents should have more say than Colorado Springs residents- The planning process will be of benefit- Come up with a doable plan—not a “pie-in-sky” plan that just sits on a shelf- Consider implementing the Plan in phases, if necessary- The status quo can't continue. We need a decision; there's just too much damage occurring now and it's not sustainable- The process should produce a comprehensive, systematic solution that address parking and access issues and keeps the Incline open to the public and makes resident, visitors and owners all satisfied with the outcome- Implementation in general is a concern (more specifically funding and fragmentation of the effort)- The influence of the Manitou Springs Parking Authority Board; is there a better way to include them in the process so they don't turn down ideas without full consideration?- Commitment from members of the Task Force to see this through to full success- How can we find consensus on the Task Force?- How to deal with the attitudes of the property owners in the area- Bringing all the proper parties to the table with a commitment to addressing all the issues- Is there a clear consensus that the Incline will be opened? What's the goal?- Some property owners and some residents don't want the Incline open- Consider the Forest Service criteria- Is the Cog willing to share use of some of its property?- Are the true intentions out on the table from the property owners?- I'm concerned that the public meetings will be one-sided because people who use the Incline are doing something illegal. I'm afraid their voices will be diminished because of the trespassing issue- This process must be balanced

